

WASHINGTON- The United States House of Representatives approved a bill today which increased the death gratuity from \$12,000 to \$100,000 for military personnel killed while on active duty. Congressman Spencer Bachus (R-AL) and Congressman Dennis Moore (D-KS) first introduced legislation in September of 2004 to honor our military personnel by increasing the benefit.

"In passing this legislation, Congress has taken valuable steps in assisting the survivors of servicemen and women killed in the line of duty. The present death benefit is woefully inadequate to compensate the emotional and financial burdens placed upon a family as a result of their loss. The fact that our bill attracted so much bi-partisan support shows that most in Congress recognized a crying need," said Bachus.

The increase in the death gratuity was included as a part of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Iraq and Afghanistan and Tsunami assistance. Under the bill, the military's total maximum death benefits would increase to \$500,000, including \$400,000 in subsidized life insurance.

"By voting to increase the military death gratuity, the House has demonstrated its commitment to our military personnel

who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country," said Moore. "

While no amount of money could make up for the loss of a loved one, this increase

will help ensure the families of those who have served with honor are properly taken care of."

Congressmen Bachus and Moore introduced the Death Gratuity Improvement Act on January 20th of this year to honor our military personnel by raising the death benefit to \$100,000. A

significant provision in the Bachus-Moore bill would allow the new benefits to be applied retroactively to all servicemen and women who have died while serving on active duty since September 11, 2001.

The Bachus-Moore bill, H.R. 292, has strong bi-partisan support and is currently co-sponsored by **237** Republicans and Democrats.

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